

APPLICATION UNDER UNITED STATES PATENT LAWS

Atty. Dkt. No. 0305943

Invention: TRANSMITTER APPARATUS, RECEIVER APPARATUS AND RECEIVER METHOD

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This is a:

- ☐ Provisional Application
- ☒ Regular Utility Application
- ☐ Continuing Application
 - ☐ The contents of the parent are incorporated by reference
- ☐ PCT National Phase Application
- ☐ Design Application
- ☐ Reissue Application
- ☐ Plant Application
- ☐ Substitute Specification
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SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

TRANSMITTER APPARATUS, RECEIVER APPARATUS AND RECEIVING
METHOD

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

5 This application is based upon and claims the
benefit of priority from the prior Japanese Patent
Application No. 2002-340968, filed November 25, 2002,
the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by
reference.

10 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

 This invention relates to the improvement of a
transmitter apparatus which can transmit data contents
by use of TV broadcasting and a network such as
15 Internet, for example. Further, this invention relates
to the improvement of a receiver apparatus and
receiving method which receive data contents
transmitted from the transmitter apparatus.

2. Description of the Related Art

20 As is well known in the art, recently,
distribution systems which provide contents acquired
from various types of information supplying media to a
large number of users are developed. As the contents
distribution system, for example, moving picture
25 contents distribution service or the like is put into
practice.

 The moving picture contents distribution service

is to permit moving picture contents to be distributed from a server to a television (TV) receiver and observed (viewed and listened) by connecting the TV receiver to Internet and requesting a call of the moving picture contents from the TV receiver to a preset server on Internet.

In the moving picture contents distribution service described above, the data size of the moving picture contents which flow through a communication line becomes extremely large. Therefore, in order to provide the moving picture contents distribution service of a sufficiently practical level to the user, it becomes necessary to enhance the operation speed of the network (make the network into a broadband form).

For example, when the moving picture contents are subjected to a compression process by use of an MPEG (Moving Picture Experts Group) 2 system, the transmission rate thereof may become 4 Mbps (Mega bit per second) for standard TV picture quality based on the NTSC (National Television System Committee) system and 30 Mbps for Hi-vision picture quality in some cases.

When Internet communication is performed by use of an analog modem via an analog telephone line in general households, the transmission rate thereof becomes approximately 56 Kbps (Kilo bit per second) at most.

In this situation, for example, when the moving

picture contents of one hour for the standard TV picture quality based on the NTSC system are downloaded from the server to the TV receiver, the total data size of the moving picture contents of one hour becomes

5 $4 \text{ Mbps} \times \text{one hour} \times 60 \text{ minutes} \times 60 \text{ seconds} =$
 $14400 \text{ Mbits} = 14745600 \text{ Kbits}.$

Therefore, time required for downloading the data is $14745600 \text{ Kbits} / 56 \text{ Kbits} = 263314 \text{ seconds} = 73 \text{ hours}$, that is, three days. Thus, it is practically

10 impossible to download the moving picture contents from the server and observe the moving picture contents according to the request of the user.

Recently, as the broadband communication service using the analog telephone line, an ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) has been popularized. In

15 Internet connection by use of the ADSL, a transmission rate of 1.5 Mbps to 12 Mbps can be attained.

Therefore, in the case of an 8 Mbps type ADSL, there is a possibility that the communication

20 performance capable of playing back the moving picture contents of 4 Mbps which have the standard TV picture quality based on the NTSC system can be attained.

However, in the case of the moving picture contents of Hi-vision picture quality which require a transmission

25 rate of approximately 30 Mbps, it becomes necessary to use a transmission rate which is three times to four times the conventional case.

Since a transmission rate of 100 Mbps can be attained in optical fiber communication means using an FTTH (Fiber To The Home), the moving picture contents of Hi-vision picture quality having a transmission rate of approximately 30 Mbps can be stably played back. However, since conservation of the communication infrastructure is required to popularize the FTTH, it is considered that Internet connection using an analog telephone line such as ADSL will become dominant in general households for the time being.

Therefore, providers of moving picture contents distribution services are required to provide practical services for a large number of general households which make connections to Internet by use of the analog telephone line in order to widely collect as many users as possible. Thus, they prepare moving picture contents of low picture quality corresponding to a low transmission rate.

However, the transmission rate of the communication network is referred to as best effort and is not ensured and the transmission rate is extremely lowered at the time of congestion of the network even in the case of 8 Mbps type ADSL, for example. In this case, in a TV receiver, the playback picture will be destroyed due to a reception error of the moving picture contents.

Therefore, the provider makes an attempt so as to

permit the moving picture contents to be stably
received on the TV receiver side. In order to serve
the above purpose, the provider is required to reduce
the data size of the moving picture contents as small
5 as possible and perform services having margins with
respect to the transmission rates of the communication
network by previously taking it into consideration that
the transmission rate of the communication network will
be lowered. As a result, the picture quality of the
10 moving picture contents which can be provided will
become low.

Thus, if the operation speeds of the Internet
connection environment in the general households are
not sufficiently enhanced, sufficiently high
15 transmission rates to distribute moving picture
contents with high picture quality cannot be attained
and strict restrictions are placed on the operation of
performing the moving picture contents distribution
service.

20 In Jpn. Pat. Appln. KOKAI Publication
No. 2002-64806, the technique for correctly displaying
contents distributed on TV broadcasting on the receiver
when password data obtained via Internet by use of an
address attached to a TV broadcasting signal is set to
25 correspond to password data attached to the TV
broadcasting signal is disclosed.

Further, in Jpn. Pat. Appln. KOKAI Publication

No. 2002-55909, the technique for permitting the user to select an Internet address and access a desired site since an access device reads out the Internet address from a remote controller and displays the same when the receiver device extracts the Internet address from the received contents and stores the same into the remote controller is disclosed.

However, in either of the above Patent Publication Documents, the technique for permitting the distribution service of moving picture contents with the extremely large data size to be performed at a transmission rate which becomes sufficiently practical with respect to the user as described above is not described at all.

As described above, in the present moving picture contents distribution system, it is necessary to provide a high speed communication line on the user side in order to distribute large-capacity moving picture contents of Hi-vision, for example.

However, since the analog telephone line is dominantly used in the network connection environment in the present general households, the transmission rate which is sufficiently high to download the moving picture contents cannot be attained. Particularly, it is difficult to download and play back the moving picture contents of high picture quality at the Hi-vision level.

Therefore, the provider has a problem that low-rate moving picture contents must be distributed so that he can provide the distribution service with respect to the user having a low-rate communication
5 line.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A transmitter apparatus according to one aspect of the present invention may comprise first transmitting means for transmitting encrypted contents to which link
10 information is attached, and second transmitting means for transmitting an encryption key used to decrypt the contents transmitted by use of the first transmitting means to a communication network based on uplink data which is created by use of the link information
15 transmitted by the first transmitting means and input via the communication network.

Further, a receiver apparatus according to another aspect of the present invention may comprise recording means for receiving and storing encrypted contents
20 together with link information, transmitting means for creating uplink data which requires an encryption key used to decrypt the encrypted contents based on the link information stored in the recording means and transmitting the uplink data to a communication
25 network, and decrypting means for acquiring the encryption key required by the uplink data from the communication network and decrypting the encrypted

contents stored in the recording means.

Further, a receiving method according to still
another aspect of the present invention may comprise
receiving encrypted contents together with link
5 information, storing the received encrypted contents
and link information, creating uplink data which
requires an encryption key used to decrypt the
encrypted contents based on the stored link
information, transmitting the thus created uplink data
10 to a communication network, acquiring the encryption
key required by the uplink data from the communication
network and decrypting the stored encrypted contents
based on the acquired encryption key.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

15 FIG. 1 is a diagram schematically showing a moving
picture contents distribution system, for illustrating
an embodiment of this invention,

FIG. 2 is a diagram for illustrating a method for
encrypting moving picture contents in the above
20 embodiment,

FIG. 3 is a block configuration diagram for
specifically illustrating a server and television
receiver in the above embodiment,

25 FIG. 4 is a diagram for illustrating a case
wherein time stamps and encryption keys are set to
correspond to each other and recorded in a memory of
the server in the above embodiment,

FIG. 5 is a view for illustrating operation screens when the user observes desired moving picture contents in the above embodiment,

FIG. 6 is a diagram for illustrating an operation when the playback operation and temporary stopping operation are requested in the above embodiment,

FIG. 7 is a diagram for illustrating an operation when a fast-forwarding playback operation is requested in the above embodiment,

FIG. 8 is a diagram for illustrating an operation when a slow playback operation is requested in the above embodiment, and

FIG. 9 is a flowchart explaining the operation of a system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

There will now be described an embodiment of this invention in detail with reference to the accompanying drawings. FIG. 1 schematically shows a moving picture contents distribution system which will be explained in the present embodiment. In FIG. 1, a symbol 11 denotes a broadcasting station. The broadcasting station 11 broadcasts moving picture contents in a digital form.

In this case, the broadcasting station 11 subjects the broadcasted moving picture contents to an encrypting process, accesses a specified server 12 and attaches link information used to read out information

to the moving picture contents, and transmits the resultant information from an antenna 13. Further, the broadcasting station 11 supplies and holds an encryption key used to encrypt the moving picture contents to and in the server 12 specified by the link information.

Station 11 may include divider block 11a, processor block 11b, first adder block 11c, and second adder block 11d. Divider block 11a may be configured to divide given contents into data units having a prescribed amount of data. Processor block 11b may be configured to execute encryption processing against each of the divided data units using different encryption keys. First adder block 11c may be configured to add time information to each of the encrypted data units, wherein the time information indicates given reproduction timing. Second adder block 11d may be configured to add the link information to encrypted contents obtained by sequentially continuing the encrypted data units, wherein each of the encrypted data units may have the time information.

Server 12 may comprise transmitter 24 including first transmission part 24a and second transmission part 24b. First transmission part 24a may be configured to transmit, to communication network 19, other time information for specifying the data unit of the encrypted contents being transmitted by station 11.

Second transmission part 24b may be configured to transmit to communication network 19 the encryption key, wherein the encryption key serves to decrypt the data unit corresponding to the other time information.

5 In this case, a signal transmitted from the antenna 13 of the broadcasting station 11 is received by an antenna 16 of a TV receiver 15 of the user via a satellite 14. The TV receiver 15 takes out moving picture contents from the signal received by the
10 antenna 16, supplies the moving picture contents in an encrypted state to an HDD (hard Disk Drive) 17 and stores the same in a hard disk 18.

 Further, the TV receiver 15 takes out link information from the signal received by the antenna 16
15 and accesses the server 12 via Internet 19 to acquire an encryption key from the server 12.

 Therefore, in the TV receiver 15, the encrypted moving picture contents are read out from the hard disk 18 and encryption of the moving picture contents is
20 decoded (broken) based on the encryption key acquired from the server 12. As a result, it becomes possible to observe the moving picture contents.

 According to the above embodiment, the moving picture contents which are large-capacity data contents
25 are encrypted and transmitted to the TV receiver 15 on the broadcasting radio waves and stored on the hard disk 18. Further, in Internet 19, an encryption key

used to decode (break) encryption of the moving picture contents is transmitted.

Thus, it becomes unnecessary to distribute the large-capacity moving picture contents on Internet 19. Therefore, it becomes possible to stably distribute the large-capacity moving picture contents at the practical level with respect to general users who make connections to Internet 19 by use of the analog telephone line. Therefore, it becomes possible to observe the moving picture contents.

FIGS. 2(a) to 2(d) illustrate a method for encrypting moving picture contents. That is, as shown in FIG. 2(a), a series of successive moving picture contents is divided into a plurality of moving picture packets P1, P2, P3, P4, ..., Pn as shown in FIG. 2(b).

Then, as shown in FIG. 2(c), the moving picture packets P1, P2, P3, P4, ..., Pn which are thus divided are subjected to an encrypting process by use of different encryption keys K1, K2, K3, K4, ..., Kn.

Further, time stamps T1, T2, T3, T4, ..., Tn which are time information to specify playback timings are respectively attached to the thus encrypted moving picture packets C1, C2, C3, C4, ..., Cn.

After this, as shown in FIG. 2(d), the encrypted moving picture packets C1, C2, C3, C4, ..., Cn with the time stamps T1, T2, T3, T4, ..., Tn attached thereto are

reconfigured into a series of successive encrypted moving picture contents. Thus, the moving picture contents encrypting process is completed.

5 In this case, in the broadcasting station 11, link information used to access the server 12 is attached to the encrypted moving picture contents configured as shown in FIG. 2(d) and transmitted from the antenna 13.

10 In the broadcasting station 11, the encryption keys K1, K2, K3, K4, ..., Kn used for the encrypting process of the moving picture contents and the time stamps T1, T2, T3, T4, ..., Tn are set to correspond to each other and supplied to and held in the server 12.

15 The link information and encrypted moving picture contents transmitted from the broadcasting station 11 via the antenna 13 are received by the TV receiver 15 and stored on the hard disk 18.

20 In this case, if the user performs an operation of requesting that preset encrypted moving picture contents stored on the hard disk 18 be observed with respect to the TV receiver 15, the TV receiver 15 reads out link information corresponding to the encrypted moving picture contents which are required to be observed from the hard disk 18.

25 Then, the TV receiver 15 creates a command which requires the encryption keys K1, K2, K3, K4, ..., Kn which are used to decrypt the encrypted moving picture contents based on the readout link information and

transmits the same as uplink data to Internet 19.

An IP (Internet Protocol) address to specify the server 12 which holds the necessary encryption keys K_1 , K_2 , K_3 , K_4 , ..., K_n is attached to the uplink data.

5 Therefore, when receiving an encryption requesting command contained in the uplink data, the server 12 corresponding to the IP address transmits data for decryption containing the time stamps T_1 , T_2 , T_3 , T_4 , ..., T_n and the encryption keys K_1 , K_2 , K_3 , K_4 , ..., K_n
10 held therein to Internet 19.

 In this case, the server 12 sequentially transmits pairs of the encryption keys K_i and time stamps T_i such as a pair of the encryption key K_1 and time stamp T_1 , a pair of the encryption key K_2 and time stamp T_2 ,
15 a pair of the encryption key K_3 and time stamp T_3 , ... to Internet 19 at preset timings.

 Thus, the TV receiver 15 first acquires the pair of the encryption key K_1 and time stamp T_1 and reads out an encrypted moving picture packet T_1+C_1 which
20 coincides with the time stamp T_1 from the encrypted moving picture contents stored on the hard disk 18.

 After this, the TV receiver 15 subjects the encrypted moving picture packet C_1 to the decrypting process by use of the encryption key K_1 which makes
25 the pair together with the time stamp T_1 . Then, it removes the time stamp T_1 and acquires a moving picture packet P_1 .

Next, the TV receiver 15 acquires the pair of the encryption key K2 and time stamp T2 and reads out an encrypted moving picture packet T2+C2 which coincides with the time stamp T2 from the encrypted moving picture contents stored on the hard disk 18.

After this, the TV receiver 15 subjects the encrypted moving picture packet C2 to the decrypting process by use of the encryption key K2 which makes the pair together with the time stamp T2. Then, it removes the time stamp T2 and acquires a moving picture packet P2. After this, the same operation is repeatedly performed until a moving picture packet Pn is obtained.

That is, the TV receiver 15 reads out an encrypted moving picture packet Ti+Ci which coincides with the time stamp Ti from the encrypted moving picture contents stored on the hard disk 18 according to the pair of the time stamp Ti and the encryption key Ki ($1 \leq i \leq n$) acquired as data for decryption.

After this, the TV receiver 15 subjects the encrypted moving picture packet Ci to the decrypting process by use of the encryption key Ki which makes the pair together with the time stamp Ti. Then, it removes the time stamp Ti and acquires a moving picture packet Pi.

Next, the TV receiver 15 configures a series of successive moving picture contents as shown in

FIG. 2(a) based on the thus acquired moving picture packets $P_1, P_2, P_3, P_4, \dots, P_n$. The moving picture contents can be demodulated and displayed as a video image.

5 As described above, a series of successive moving picture contents is divided into a plurality of moving picture packets $P_1, P_2, P_3, P_4, \dots, P_n$ and the secrecy of the moving picture contents can be further enhanced by subjecting the respective moving picture packets $P_1,$
10 $P_2, P_3, P_4, \dots, P_n$ to the encrypting process by use of the different encryption keys $K_1, K_2, K_3, K_4, \dots, K_n$.

FIG. 3 shows the server 12 and TV receiver 15 in detail. That is, the server 12 records encryption keys K_i and time stamps T_i transmitted from the broadcasting
15 station 11 in a memory 20. In this case, as shown in FIG. 4, the encryption keys $K_1, K_2, K_3, K_4, \dots, K_n$ and the time stamps $T_1, T_2, T_3, T_4, \dots, T_n$ which are set in the correspondence relation are recorded in the memory 20.

20 The encryption keys K_i and time stamps T_i recorded in the memory 20 are selectively read out by a reader 22 controlled according to an instruction of a controller 21. The readout encryption key K_i and time stamp T_i are converted into a form which is suitable to
25 be output to Internet 19 by an encoder 23 and are transmitted to Internet 19 via a transmitter 24 as the decrypted data.

Further, the server 12 receives uplink data transmitted to Internet 19 from the TV receiver 15, decodes the data by use of a decoder 25 and then analyzes the data by use of the controller 21 to
5 control the reader 22.

In the TV receiver 15, a signal received by the antenna 16 is supplied to a tuner 26 and preset encrypted moving picture contents and link information attached thereto are extracted from the signal.

10 The encrypted moving picture contents and link information extracted by the tuner 26 are subjected to a demodulation process by a demodulator 27, transmitted to the HDD 17 via a file system manager 28 and recorded on the hard disk 18.

15 The user can make a request to the TV receiver 15 by operating a remote controller 29 so as to permit the encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 to be observed. In this case, in the remote controller 29, a time stamp is specified and a request
20 for playback of the encrypted moving picture contents is made.

A user-interface (UI) manager 30 which has received operation information of the remote controller 29 reads out link information attached to the encrypted
25 moving picture contents which are requested for observation from the hard disk 18 via the file system manager 28.

The UI manager 30 creates uplink data containing a command which requests an encryption key corresponding to the time stamp specified by the remote controller 29 based on the link information. The uplink data is
5 converted into a form which is suitable to be output to Internet 19 by an encoder 31 and transmitted to Internet 19.

Then, the server 12 receives an encryption key request command with the time stamp attached thereto
10 from the uplink data transmitted to Internet 19, decodes the command by the decoder 25 and supplies the result of decoding to the controller 21.

The controller 21 controls the reader 22 based on the input time stamp and causes the specified time
15 stamp T_i and the encryption key K_i corresponding thereto to be read out from the memory 20. The time stamp T_i and encryption key K_i read out by use of the reader 22 are transmitted to Internet 19 via the encoder 23 and transmitter 24 as data for decryption as
20 described before.

Then, in the TV receiver 15, the data for decryption transmitted to Internet 19 is received by a receiver 32, decoded by a decoder 33 and then separated into a time stamp T_i and encryption key K_i by a
25 separator 34. The time stamp T_i is supplied to the file system manager 28 and the encryption key K_i is supplied to a decrypter 35.

In this case, the file system manager 28 reads out an encrypted moving picture packet $Ti+Ci$ corresponding to the input time stamp Ti from the hard disk 18 and supplies the same to the decrypter 35. Then, the
5 decrypter 35 subjects the input encrypted moving picture packet Ci to the decrypting process by use of the encryption key Ki supplied from the separator 34 to generate a moving picture packet Pi .

After this, the moving picture packet Pi generated
10 from the decrypter 35 is supplied to a decoder 36, decoded and configured into a series of successive moving picture contents and displayed as a video image on a monitor 37.

Next, a method for permitting the user to make
15 a request for observation of desired encrypted moving picture contents among a plurality of encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 by use of the remote controller 29 is explained.

First, when the user operates the playback request
20 key of the remote controller 29, the file system manager 28 displays a plurality of encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 on the monitor 37 for respective genres.

For example, when the user selects the genre of
25 movies on the screen of the monitor 37, thumbnail pictures and titles of contents corresponding to the movie and addresses which are link information

items thereof among a plurality of encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 are displayed on the monitor 37 in a list form as shown in FIG. 5(a).

5 When the contents corresponding to the movie cannot be displayed on one screen, operation areas such as "Return" and "Next" are displayed on the monitor 37 and the contents can be displayed over a plurality of screens which are selectively switched.

10 On the list-form display screen, one title is surrounded by a frame line L. The frame line L is vertically moved to surround any one of the titles by operating an up/down key or the like of the remote controller 29. Then, the user sets the frame line L
15 to surround the desired title and operates an enter key of the remote controller 29, and then, the operation screen corresponding to the movie of the title is displayed on the monitor 37 as shown in FIG. 5(b).

20 On the operation screen, the playback operation "PLAY", fast forwarding operation "FF", fast reversing operation "REW", temporary stopping operation "PAUSE" and stopping operation "STOP" can be performed. A desired one of the above operations can be selected
25 by operating a right/left key of the remote controller 29 and realized by operating the enter key.

For example, when the playback button "PLAY" is

operated, the UI manager 30 of the TV receiver 15 transmits uplink data which sequentially specifies all of the encrypted moving picture packets $T_i + C_i$ configuring the selected encrypted moving picture contents to Internet 19 as described before.

In order to serve the above purpose, the controller 21 of the server 12 sequentially transmits the time stamp T_i and encryption key K_i specified by the uplink data to Internet 19 as data for decryption.

As a result, in the TV receiver 15, encrypted moving picture packets C_i are sequentially read out from the hard disk 18 and decrypted based on the data for decryption. Thus, the contents which the user selects from a plurality of encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 can be played back.

Specifically, FIG. 6(a) shows the contents $T_i + C_i$ which the user selects for observation from the plurality of encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 by operating the remote controller 29.

In the TV receiver 15, the encrypted moving picture packets C_1, C_2, C_3, \dots corresponding to the time stamps T_1, T_2, T_3, \dots are sequentially read out from the hard disk 18 based on the time stamp T_i contained in the data for decryption transmitted from the server 12 as shown in FIG. 6(b). Then, they are

decrypted based on the encryption keys K1, K2, K3,

Next, in the TV receiver 15, moving picture packets P1, P2, P3, ... after decryption are made continuous to configure moving picture contents as shown in FIG. 6(c). Thus, the moving picture contents can be played back.

During the above playback operation, for example, if the temporary stopping button "PAUSE" is operated at the playback time of the moving picture packet P4, uplink data which specifies the stamp T4 corresponding to the moving picture packet P4 is transmitted to Internet 19.

The server 12 which has received the uplink data continues to output the time stamp T4 corresponding to the moving picture packet P4 and the encryption key K4 contained in the data for decryption until the operation of the temporary stopping button "PAUSE" is released.

Therefore, in the TV receiver 15, only the encrypted moving picture packet C4 corresponding to the time stamp T4 is read out from the hard disk 18. After this, the encrypted moving picture packet C4 is decrypted by use of the encryption key K4 to be used as the moving picture packet P4 and successively played back as shown in FIG. 6(c). Thus, the temporary stopping operation is performed.

Further, when the playback button "PLAY" and fast

forwarding button "FF" are operated to request
a fast-forwarding playback operation (special playback
operation), the TV receiver 15 transmits uplink
data which intermittently specifies time stamps T1, T4,
5 T7, ... from the encrypted moving picture contents
recorded on the hard disk 18 as shown in FIG. 7(a) to
Internet 19.

As a result, the server 12 transmits data for
decryption which contains the time stamps T1, T4,
10 T7, ... and encryption keys K1, K4, K7, ... thereof.
Further, the TV receiver 15 intermittently reads out
encrypted moving picture packets C1, C4, C7, ... from
the hard disk 18 based on the received data for
decryption as shown in FIG. 7(b) and decrypts the
15 readout packets by use of the encryption keys K1, K4,
K7,

Then, the TV receiver 15 successively plays back
the decrypted moving picture packets P1, P4, P7, ... as
shown in FIG. 7(c). Thus, the fast-forwarding playback
20 operation can be performed.

Also, when the playback button "PLAY" and fast
reversing button "REW" are both operated to request
a fast-reversing playback operation (special playback
operation), the fast-reversing playback operation can
25 be easily performed by intermittently specifying the
time stamps Ti towards the time-preceding positions.

Further, when a slow playback operation (special

playback operation) is requested, the TV receiver 15 transmits uplink data which sequentially specifies the time stamps T1, T2, T3, ... from the encrypted moving picture contents recorded on the hard disk 18 to Internet 19 as shown in FIG. 8(a).

Thus, the server 12 transmits data for decryption which contains the time stamps T1, T2, T3, ... and encryption keys K1, K2, K3, ... thereof. Further, the TV receiver 15 reads out encrypted moving picture packets C1, C2, C3, ... from the hard disk 18 based on the received data for decryption as shown in FIG. 8(b) and decrypts the readout packets by use of the encryption keys K1, K2, K3,

Then, the TV receiver 15 plays back the decrypted moving picture packets P1, P2, P3, ... by a preset number of times as shown in FIG. 8(c). Thus, the slow playback operation can be performed.

FIG. 9 is a flowchart explaining the operation of a system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

First, encryption processing against each of divided data units is executed using different encryption keys (ST06). Then, given time information is added to each of encrypted data units to provide encrypted contents (ST08), wherein the time information indicates given reproduction timing. Then, encrypted contents as well as link information are received

(ST10). Then, the received encrypted contents and the received link information are stored (ST12).

5 Thereafter, given uplink data is generated based on the stored link information (ST14), wherein the uplink data requires an encryption key for decrypting the encrypted contents. Here, the uplink data may require the time information as well as the encryption key for decrypting encrypted contents in unit of data units. Then, the generated uplink data is transmitted
10 to a communication network (ST16). Then, the encryption key, required by the uplink data, is obtained from communication network (INTERNET) 19, wherein the time information may also be received from communication network 19.

15 Then, the stored encrypted contents are decrypted based on the obtained encryption key (ST20). Here, the data units indicated by the received time information may be decrypted using the received encryption key. Thereafter, one or more selectable titles corresponding
20 to stored encrypted contents are displayed on a display screen (ST22). At this time, an operation screen for requiring at least one of a playback, stop, pause, and special playback, may be displayed with respect to the encrypted contents corresponding to the selected title
25 (ST24).

 In the above embodiment, information which specifies the time stamp T_i is contained in uplink data

transmitted to Internet 19 from the TV receiver 15 and the server 12 transmits the time stamp T_i specified by the uplink data and the encryption key K_i thereof.

However, this is not limitative and, for example,
5 by specifying only the playback function or fast-forwarding playback function by use of uplink data, the server 12 may automatically select a necessary time stamp T_i based on the requested function and transmit the same together with the encryption key K_i . Thus, it
10 becomes possible to easily manage the playback operation and other special playback operations in the TV receiver 15 on the server 12 side, that is, on the contents provider side.

Further, in the above embodiment, the encrypted
15 moving picture contents broadcasted via the satellite 14 are previously received by the TV receiver 15 and stored on the hard disk 18. However, as the encrypted moving picture contents stored on the hard disk 18, data which is previously transmitted with much time by
20 use of a communication network can be used, for example.

In the above embodiment, the encryption key K_i is transmitted from the broadcasting station 11 to the server 12 and held therein. However, it is also
25 possible to transmit the encryption key K_i from the server 12 to the broadcasting station 11 and subject the moving picture packet P_i to be broadcasted to the

encrypting process by using the encryption key K_i given from the server 12 in the broadcasting station 11.

5 The broadcasting station 11 and server 12 can be managed by different business companies or by the same business company. In short, the configuration may be so formed that the encryption key K_i can be transmitted between the broadcasting station 11 and the server 12 with high security.

10 With the above configuration and method, large-capacity data contents are encrypted, transmitted together with link information and stored on the receiver side. Further, the encryption key used to decode (or break) encryption is transmitted in the communication network. As a result, since it becomes
15 unnecessary to distribute large-capacity contents by use of the communication network, the large-capacity contents can be stably distributed at the practical level irrespective of the network connection environment of the user. Therefore, it becomes
20 possible to observe the large-capacity contents.

 While the description above refers to particular embodiments of the present invention, it will be understood that many modifications may be made without departing from the spirit thereof. The accompanying
25 claims are intended to cover such modifications as would fall within the true scope and spirit of the present invention. The presently disclosed embodiments

are therefore to be considered in all respects as illustrative and not restrictive, the scope of the invention being indicated by the appended claims, rather than the foregoing description, and all changes
5 that come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are therefore intended to be embraced therein.

As described above, according to the present invention, a transmitter apparatus, receiver apparatus
10 and receiving method which can stably distribute large-capacity data contents at the practical level irrespective of the network connection environment of the user can be provided.